1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

571 619 621 we were unable to find a precise translation of */õassi* but think it connotes the *we* as distinct from the *they* and has an overtone of something good and safe. The phrase is an opposite of *ju dole*. *Dole* means strange or harmful or bad—evidently synonyms to the /Kung.

602 621 [608] Because there were so many kinship ties among the people and because they have a system (the name relationship—to be mentioned later) by which they apply kin terms to persons who are not consanguineous relatives or affines, I wondered for a time if we should find that the people who call themselves *ju /õassi* comprised a kin group of the type which Murdock calls a deme.[1] A deme is bilateral and endogamous, Murdock says, 'comparable to the sib both in size and in the traditional rather than demonstrable bonds of kinship which unite the members'. Though the Nyae Nyae region has the elements of a deme, I am convinced that it does not constitute, strictly speaking, an organized kin group of this type, of which the people are conscious as a social form. The endogamy of the region is customary and preferred, but not required by a social rule, and it is not from the group of people as a whole who are *ju /õassi* that social regulation derives.

Marriage regulations: the incest taboo and its expression in avoidances

582 835 Marriages are forbidden in /Kung social organization on one basis only. That basis is incest. In common with nearly all mankind (excepting, of course, the Pharaohs and a few other rare examples), the /Kung incest taboo prohibits marriage or sexual relations between Fa and Da, Mo and So, Br and Si. The incest taboo is extended beyond the nuclear family to certain additional categories of persons, and marriage with them is also rigorously forbidden by /Kung social law.

[842] The /Kung did not express the belief that in-breeding *per se* produces inferior offspring and must for that reason be avoided. Although they believe that in conception the semen unites with menstrual blood, their language does not use the image of blood as ours does. They do not think of relatives as having the same blood or any [827] physical substance in common, actually or by way of figure of speech to represent inheritable characteristics, in so far as we know, and do not think that common inheritance is somehow what makes it wrong to marry close kin.

The thought that incest has been avoided by mankind because it would be exceedingly disruptive to the internal cohesion of the nuclear family comes to the mind of the analyst of social forms but not to the minds of /Kung informants. And no mention was made of the obvious social advantage of marrying outside the nuclear family and thereby weaving a supporting web of kinship with many other families and bands.

The /Kung feel a deep, internalized, pervading horror of incest which they do not try to explain. Incest with parent, offspring, or sibling is unthinkable. 'Only dogs do that—not men.' 'It would be madness (*di*).' 'It would be dangerous, like going up to a lion.' Many refused to speak with me about such 'bad things'.

571 619 621 the Bushmen were saying of themselves, in effect, 'We are not animals, we are human beings', a connotation we did not discover in the thinking of the /Kung themselves. Ledimo, our chief interpreter, also a Chwana, said the phrase had the connotation of 'perfect persons' and that 'clean' and 'empty' were aspects of the word */õassi*, he thought. Elizabeth Marshall Thomas paraphrased it in the title of her book, *The Harmless People* (Knopf, New York; Martin Secker & Warburg, London, 1959).

[1] Murdock, op. cit., pp. 62–63.

/156 cont./

684 Supposedly women are not killed for adultery.

/157/ Divorce rarely occurs, and then only when the woman
586 has become too old. The man then simply sends her away.

In most cases, however, the woman remains with her hus-
[595] band even in old age, while he provides himself with one or two younger and stronger women.

The children of the divorced or deceased woman stay with their father and are raised by the new wife.

587 Widows are permitted to marry again after a certain time, as is also the case for divorced women.

589 There is no special dress for widows.

The widows live in a special hut with the young girls.

The woman definitely occupies a position fairly equal to
562 that of the man. Also she quite frequently and energetically hen-
264 pecks him. Meals are consumed by the whole family together.

Concerning the division of labor, see page 29.

[184] The Rietfontein Auin always have just one wife. The reason
595 for this is said to be that "little food" is available. The Auin from Gam, on the average, have two, sometimes five wives.

Every wife has her own household.

The first wife seems to occupy a preferential position. It may be, however, that this is only because she is older.

548 As improbable as it may sound after what I have hitherto de-
684 scribed, there are supposed to be prostitutes among the married women, who are willing to oblige for presents. When the husband finds out about it, he chases the woman away. It is not quite clear to me how this fits in with blood vengeance which is practiced in other cases. The Auin declared to me, "If a woman has affairs with many men, the man cannot after all wage 'orlog' with all these men."

Such a situation seems to be judged differently than one when a woman commits adultery in a special case.

842 Means for preventing conception are unknown.

Artificial abortion is sometimes supposed to be induced by
847 stepping on the abdomen of the pregnant woman.

Concerning infanticide, see page 5.

843 Sexual intercourse is not suspended until pregnancy has reached an advanced stage.

!KUNG

[19 cont.]

approximate ages of the members:

	Horde I	Horde II	Horde III	Horde IV
Men	9	7	4	10
Old men	--	--	4	1
Women of child-bearing age	10	12	13	9
Matrons	4	8	7	6
Infants	6	6	7	2
Small children:				
Boys 1-4 years old	2	3	8	3
Girls 1-4 years old	3	4	6	1
Children:				
Boys 5-10 years old	4	4	?	?
Girls 5-10 years old	3	2	?	?
Young men	5	--	?	?
Young women	5	3	?	?

The above table thus has reference to 44 women capable of bearing children and to 38 marriages, of which two are polygamous. Four are widows. In these 38 marriages, there are 15 infants, mostly under one year old. To the extent it could be determined, 12 women were pregnant, and about five of them had older infants. It would seem, then, that nursing beyond one year affords no practical protection against a new conception.

The rule among the Nog-au that cohabitation with the mother may be renewed only when the baby is able to sit is well known, but it is not particularly observed.

With these 15 infants there should accordingly be 45 small children from one to four years old; in actual fact, however, there are only 30 small children, which gives an infant mortality rate of 33 per cent. This rate is no higher than is to be expected among primitive tribes in malaria regions; in fact, it is lower than in some native locations, such as East London.

[29 cont.]

593 men are strongly influenced by their wives. It practically never
[562] happens that a man beats his wife. Monogamy [30] is the rule.
595 I know of one single case of a man having two sisters as wives. It is true that certain marriage laws frequently force the men to marry considerably older girls. It is therefore understandable that in such circumstances the desire for a younger life's companion frequently arises, but the consent of the first wife is absolutely necessary. It is said: "He who has a good wife may have several; he who has a bad one must be content with her alone." The Bush-
842 men do not know any means of preventing pregnancy, and, accordingly, very soon after marriage the young wife will find herself
843 with child. The husband and his sisters-in-law must see to it that she eats no sour veld fruit, nothing sweet, and no fat meat. No one is allowed to walk behind the pregnant woman's back; no pot is supposed to be put on the fire until the woman has been rubbed with the soot of the pot; she is not supposed to sit where the other
844 people are, but must stay to one side. When the time for delivery approaches, she must step over the legs of her husband, who has rubbed medicine into incisions in his calves. When the woman feels that the birth pangs are beginning, she goes into the bush by herself and looks for veldkost. She is not supposed to sit down while doing so, because that would have harmful effects on the birth. Then she picks grass, prepares a place under a tree, puts her bag of veldkost to one side, and gives birth to the child in a squatting position, grasping a branch with her hands. Then she takes the child, severs the umbilical cord herself, puts it in her veldkost bag, and goes home with it. The cord is always severed with a quartz knife (as among the Dama). The umbilical cord (!nm) is buried. Only women who are unafraid and who have already given birth to one child follow this procedure. A woman who is giving birth for the first time and is afraid does not go into the veld, but stays at home. As soon as the pains begin, she weeps and goes out, sits down, and stands up again. Older women of the kin group accompany her, and in their presence the child is finally born inside the hut. The men may not be present. Children, too, may not look on, and if they creep up out of curiosity, they are soundly thrashed.
[845] If there are difficulties, the abdomen is massaged. Von Zastrow
000

!KUNG

[41 cont.]

582 girl to marry him. Naturally, these sisters ordinarily do not remember their prerogative until they have failed to get another man whom they desire. Thus the young men are often forced to marry girls who are much older than themselves. If the wife
587 dies, the widower must marry a sister of his wife in case she agrees. [42] If, on the other hand, the man dies, the widow
(589) must stay with the parents-in-law for about a year. It is illegal to marry the wife or the children of a deceased brother. The widow must marry a man from another kin group and move to his vil-
611 lage (1). The boys belong to the father's kin group, the girls to THE MOTHER'S KIN GROUP.

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1. "The fate of many a young childless widow is much worse, however. A Bushman communicated the following concerning this matter: 'When a man dies and leaves behind a wife without children, and the brother-in-law refuses to accept his brother's bow and thereby his sister-in-law, she may return to her father's village. But this does not by any means always happen. As a woman who did not bear children she is not highly regarded. Her life has no significance. The men of the village talk about her case and designate one from their midst to destroy the useless life. This man will come to the widow's hut in the evening and will sit down across from her at her fire. He has a bow and arrow with him. The widow knows what is in store for her, but gives no sign. The two talk about trivial matters. After a while the man takes the bow in his hand and shoots an arrow through the heart of the woman sitting across from him. The unfortunate woman dies and is buried as inconspicuously and as quickly as possible. Blood vengeance on the part of the woman's kin group is not to be feared. After all, she did not bear any children.'" (Zastrow and Vedder, op. cit., p. 419.)

164 [45 cont.]
[753] Dr. Kasi. The people died. Very evil dsao were involved. The
[192] terminology for the description of the external genitalia is by no
[302] means as rich as among the Bantu. The women's pubic hair is
[593] usually plucked out by their husbands. Hence, it is called virgin
842 hair. The connection [46] between cohabitation and pregnancy
[757] is known. Impotence and sterility occur; there is no medicine
[278] for them. When menstruation fails to occur, nothing special is
841 done. The menstruating woman may only eat with her husband
[757] and may not go around tasting food. A warm stone is placed on
853 the stomach for menstrual pains. Children are nursed at least
[526] until the birth of the next child. The nipples are distinguished
164 by a leathery firmness. Nevertheless, mastitis does occur.

The contention that venereal diseases are very widespread is incorrect; as such they are even unknown to the Bushmen. In isolated cases I have met Bushmen on the farms with vestigial gonorrhea. Syphilis is very rare among the wild Bushman.

Skin Diseases

The wild Bushman scarcely knows anything about skin care.
[515] Since there is a lack of both water and fat, the skin, which as a rule feels silky, soft, warm, and dry, becomes cracked, and infections easily occur. A chronic eczema (gari), evidently caused by a fungus, is very widespread. To combat it, they use the milky
[278] sap of a plant called timba.
[757]

Hair Diseases

A nonmalignant hair disease that is very widespread among all the Bantu, causing the hair to fall out in roughly circular spots, is also found among the Bushmen. In addition, as among the Bushmen of Naukluft, the so-called "porcelain head" occurs, a disease that destroys the entire hair base, and the head gleams
[145] like porcelain. The hair becomes gray relatively early. Loss of hair is rare; it usually occurs in the form of baldness characteristic of schizothymia. The rounded fingernails are worn fairly long;
362 the toenails are often fissured.

NARON
!AUIN
NOGAU

[71 cont.]

581 becomes pregnant before marriage," at least so the chief of the horde assured me. Similarly, great importance is attached to off-
● [842] spring in marriage. There are no food prohibitions during preg-
843 nancy. When the confinement is near, all the women of the horde
845 gather. In case of difficulties, no help is given except a medicine.

611 The father's eldest brother is the family head. The boys be-
596 long to the father, the girls to the mother, and they also belong to the families concerned. The kinship terms for the closest rela-
601 tives are: father, mba; father's brother and family head, mzu; the latter's wife, mama (the children of father's brothers and father's sisters are called siblings, and marriage between them is forbidden); mother, aje; mother's brother, mko; the latter's wife,
582 tsoo. Unlike the !Kung, marriage is forbidden even with the children of the mother's brothers and mother's sisters; within the individual kin groups strict
595 exogamy prevails. Monogamy is the rule, but, as among the !Kung, a man may take a second wife provided he has the consent of the first.

[301 789 303]

Fig. 25. Girl's Necklace with Magic Sticks and Perfume Box (Nogau).

586 Marriage is indissoluble. The woman's family cares for the widow,
736 who, with her children, goes to her relatives. There is no obliga-
587 tion on the part of the brother-in-law to marry his widowed sister-in-law or to support her.

!Auin: Men marry when they are about 16 to 18 years old,
582 girls between 13 and 16 years of age. Both statements, of course,
584 are estimates. The suitor goes [72] to the girl's mother. If she is no longer living, the nearest relatives (father, uncle, aunt) take her place. The father is only the second to be asked. The suitor

5:Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1957 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

601 and most of the persons who eventually become his secondary affines would be name-relatives. They keep whatever term they had and add */umba* or */undai*. Theoretically, if they should not have a name-relationship they would fall back on the generational method.

When terms are applied to secondary affines by the generational method, the primary affine is the point of reference. Ego applies a term to the parent or child of the primary affine which is in the alternate generation terminologically to that of the primary affine. A term in the same generation terminologically as that of the primary affine is applied to the sibling of the primary affine. The list of terms on p. 16 shows the correspondence of the generational terms with the affinal terms. Diagram 8 (p. 17) illustrates this situation.

Consanguineous relatives of ego's may be named for secondary affines as well as primary affines. When they are, ego applies to them the same term which he applies to the secondary affine but drops */umba* and */undai*.

All relatives to whom the generational and sibling terms are applied, except name-relatives (see p. 15), have terms applied to their spouses by ego which are paired with the generational and sibling terms as listed below.

Generational or sibling term for males	*Spouse*	*Generational or sibling term for females*	*Spouse*
tsu	//ga or /utsu (//ga is preferred for FaBrWi or MoBrWi; /utsu is preferred in other relationships)	//ga or di/guma	tsu or tun/ga m.s. (tsu is preferred for FaSiHu and MoSiHu; tun/ga is preferred in other relationships)
/gu/na	tûn	tûn	/gu/na or tun/ga w.s.
tun/ga w.s. when collateral when affine	tûn w.s. /kwi w.s.	/gu/na w.s.	tun/ga w.s.
/go or tsi	tûn m.s. /utsu w.s.	/kwi or tsi	tun/ga

Part II: Some Aspects of Behaviour as Related to Categories of Kin

Marriage

842 The /Kung know that biological descent is from the father and mother, believing that the father's semen unites with the menstrual blood of the mother to form the child. But their language does not emphasize the concept of blood as ours does. A 602 /Kung speaks of a person who has blood ties with himself as being of his own people, emphasizing the phrase in some way, as when we say ' very own '.

582 Marriage with any consanguineous kin is forbidden in /Kung culture. This pro-
684 hibition is quite strictly obeyed. The very thought of marriage with a parent, offspring or sibling is horrifying to the /Kung. They could hardly be brought to talk about such ' bad things '. They told us about a man who married a woman and her

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Gikwe

could have found his shallow pit at any time of the day or night.

Nobody was there; everyone had run away. We sat down and waited while Gai put his hands to his mouth and shouted, trying to summon the people back again. When nobody came or even answered him, he flung his pipe to the ground and marched off to find them among the bushes, alternately shouting to his hidden relatives and muttering to himself, for they might be far away and the day was getting warm.

We sat in the middle ground between the depressions so that we wouldn't risk stepping on or crushing anybody's hidden things, for, without knowing it, a European can in a moment trample through a Bushman's cache, breaking the delicate bone or wooden objects, bending the reed arrows, or crushing eggshell beads. Also, among certain groups of Bushmen, every fire has a man's side and a woman's side, determined by the position of the fire as you face the doorway of the scherm, the man's side being on the right, the woman's on the left. If a man sits on the woman's side, or where a woman has been sitting, he will become impotent and will also lose his power to hunt, and if a woman sits where a man has been sitting, she will get a disease in her vagina. Something intangible, invisible, but dangerously powerful, remains on the ground. We did not know which side was which of this werf's fires, or even for sure where the fires were; we did not even know that the Gikwe had this custom, for we had learned it from Kung Bushmen, but we knew that if they did they would not welcome our contaminating their ground. We would have liked to look around, but the best thing we could do was to keep our big boots and our bodies away from their delicate, fragile, almost invisible community.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

know, but Gai became embarassed and said gravely that Pishiboro put that system there for reproduction and he alone knew how it worked. 124 825

Ukwane then said that he would explain instead, because he was an old man. Gai could not speak of sex in front of women because it was both improper and dangerous and would weaken his power to hunt, but Ukwane was too old for hunting and, besides, was past the age when many of the tabus concerning sex applied to him. Old Bushmen understand everything better anyway, young Bushmen say. 221 831 784 826 888 124

Ukwane knew a great deal. He named every major part, inside and out, of the animal, even naming the major veins and arteries that lead to and from the heart. We were not surprised to find that Bushmen, who prefer to be specific rather than general when dealing with minute things, distinguish more exterior parts of the body then we do. They have names, for example, for the inside of the elbow and the back of the knee. The *leg* of an animal means the hind leg, the front leg is the *arm*, and these are called by the same names as the arm and leg of human beings. Birds, too, fly with their arms and land on their legs, but I never could discover what insects do. 124 825

Ukwane went on to explain the various systems of the body, saying in the case of the urogenital system that liquid, which was "the little springboks," ran from the testicles into the kidneys, then down again and out the penis. He stuck to this version, too, even when Bill suggested that it might be otherwise. This does not mean that Bushmen think that urine causes conception, for they recognize the role of semen, believing that it unites with the menstrual blood of the mother to form a child. [942]

Ukwane understood the course of food and water through the digestive system, but said that food and water spread out 124 827

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

green-leafed vegetables, and sometimes many of the people of the large extended bands come together to live, to hold important ceremonies which require many people, and to enjoy each other's company. Sometimes they separate into very small bands because they can now go anywhere they wish, each family going to the part of the veld where the type of food grows that the family most enjoys. There is water everywhere, in small seasonal waterholes, in shallow salt pans, in hollow trees, and the people thrive and grow quite fat. One of their favorite foods, one that grows in great abundance at this season, is a ground nut called *tsi*, which grows on a trailing vine and is so fat that if you leave a kernel of it on a piece of paper it will leave a greasy stain. Tsi is regarded by the Kung Bushmen as a very powerful food, one of the powerful veld foods in which there is a special essence, something mysterious and magic which gives them a life force all their own so that it would be dangerous to eat them during the year if this life force were not first subdued or not first integrated with the life force of the people. These foods are the mainstays of the Bushmen's diet, and are fat; and every year people in their child-bearing years, when they consider themselves subject to harm, protect themselves against these foods by a ritual act.

The act of protection is called *choa*, and it is interesting because it differs from the protective rituals performed by agricultural peoples to save their crops or animals from harm, or to cause their increase. The Bushmen choa themselves not to protect their fertility, for decrease in the number of children is not a problem to them, but to make sure that they, the young adults and mainstays of the community, will not get thin and starve.

Those whom Bushmen call "old people," adults who have had three children, are expected to protect themselves and also to protect young people of the same sex.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

and wipes it clean with grass. Then the mother collects the stained grass, the placenta, and the bloody sand and covers them all with stones or branches, marking the spot with a tuft of grass stuck up in a bush so that no man will step on or over the place, for the ground where a child has been born is tainted with a power so strong that any man infected with it would lose an aspect of his masculinity, would lose his power to hunt. The woman does not bury the placenta, for if she did she would lose her ability to bear more children.

The moment of birth is a very important one for the child and for the mother; it is at this moment that the child acquires a power, or an essence, over which he has no control, although he can make use of it. It will last him all his life; it is a supernatural essence that forever after connects the person born with certain forces in the world around him: with weather, with childbearing, with the great game antelope, and with death, and this essence is called the *now*.

There are two kinds of *now*, a rainy or cold one and a hot or dry one. If a person has a wet *now* and burns his hair in a fire or urinates in a fire, the person's *now* is said to make the weather turn cold (if it is the dry season) or bring rain (if it is the rainy season). If a person has a dry *now* and burns hair or urinates in a fire, the *now* is said to stop a cold spell or a bad storm. When a person dies, too, the weather changes violently according to the person's *now*. After a death, scorching droughts or devastating storms are sure to follow.

We knew a Bushman woman at Gautscha whose young son was living not with her but far away with the family of his infant wife, and once, when a rainstorm came so violently that branches were splintered from the trees and water ran in torrents like waterfalls over the rocks beside the pan, the woman began to pine and grieve for her son, who, she felt

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

wishes uppermost in their minds. Orphans are eagerly adopted by their aunts or grandparents, and a newborn baby is welcomed as though it were the first baby the werf had ever seen. Sometimes, though, a baby is born that cannot be supported, and if this happens the baby is destroyed. If a woman bears a child that is crippled or badly deformed, she is expected to destroy it, and if the season is very hard and she already has a baby under a year old depending on her milk, she is forced to kill her newborn child. Bushman women can hardly bear this, but they do.

If a woman knows that she must kill her baby, she braces herself for this as best she can, and when the time comes to do it she must act immediately, must take advantage of the moment after birth before the infant has "come to life," that moment between the time the baby is born and the time her love for the baby wells up in her so that the act would be impossible forever after. She must think of the child she has already and act quickly, before she hears her infant's voice, before the baby moves or waves its feet; she must not look at it for long or hold it, but must have a shallow grave ready for it and must put it in at once and cover it and never think of it again. In times of extreme deprivation she can do this, or she can wait to watch both her children die. All this is very hard, and Bushmen, who have no mechanical form of contraception and know no way to cause miscarriage or abortion, prefer to abstain from intercourse for long periods rather than to suffer such pain.

We knew one woman who had been forced to destroy a baby to save an older child, and we knew one woman who had borne a crippled child and had been persuaded to destroy it by her mother, who had been present at the birth. Such things are very rare, though, and this is fortunate.

. . .

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot
Bushmen FX10

the women told her "a girl may do as she pleases, but a married woman may not".[1] And again Dornan writes of the Hlechware: "Sexual intercourse by the lovers before marriage, though looked upon as wrong, is very often indulged in."[2] Vague generalizations such as these really tell us next to nothing about the nature of sexual life before marriage; they simply ignore the many important sociological problems connected with the whole question of courtship and selection, social attitude towards prenuptial unchastity, legitimacy, and marriage.

Similarly Trenk says that the girls among the Namib Bushmen are generally virgins when they enter into marriage, because most of them marry soon after puberty.[3] But that premarital unchastity does actually occur is shown by his statement in another context that the children born to an unmarried woman are taken over and looked after by the man she subsequently marries, although as soon as they grow up they must be returned to their real father.[4] This implies that physiological paternity is acknowledged by these Bushmen, and that marriage is not necessary to legalize the status of children. The latter implication at least is at variance with what is known of other Bushmen, and needs to be confirmed. Among the Heikum, for example, abortion is sometimes practised by unmarried women who are pregnant, or, when "illegitimate" (i.e. prenuptial) births occur, the children are usually buried alive.[5] Here, therefore, marriage would seem to be an essential preliminary to the right to procreate and rear children, and therefore to the foundation of the family.

A family is constituted by a union between one man and one or more women, this union being legalized by marriage. The Cape Bushmen are now said to be monogamous,[6] but polygynous marriages also have been recorded by earlier writers.[7] The Namib Bushmen, according to Trenk, are monogamous; Seydel, on the other hand, curtly remarks that both polygyny and polyandry occur![8] There is no other mention of polyandry among any of the Bushmen, and the statement can hardly be accepted as accurate without full confirmation. The more northerly tribes all permit polygyny, although the frequency of such marriages varies. Among the Naron at Sandfontein monogamy

[1] Op. cit., 32. [2] Op. cit., 128. [3] Op. cit., 169. [4] Ibid., 168.
[5] Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W. Africa," 94.
[6] D. F. Bleek, *The Mantis*, ix; *idem*, "Bushman Terms of Relationship," 62.
[7] Barrow, *Travels in S. Africa*, I, 275; Campbell, *Second Journey into S. Africa*, I, 30; Stow, *Native Races of S. Africa*, 95.
[8] Trenk, op. cit., 168; Seydel, op. cit., 505: "Vielmännerei und Vielweiberei wird beobachtet."